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Rise and Fall| Collection Development: Walls & Fortifications

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The principles of a barrier wall are simple. On one side are yourself and the things you wish to defend and on the other are the dangers you wish to keep out or entrap. Throughout human existence, such wall-building has been driven by the belief that this kind of structure can safely separate 'us' from 'them,' and by the hope that a physical barricade can be made strong or secure enough to prevent a perceived enemy from breaking through it.

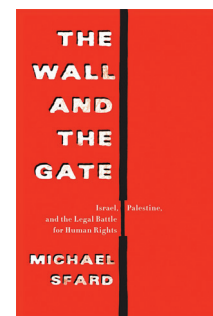
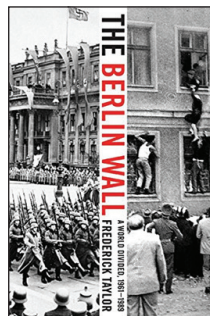
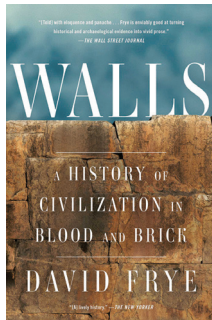
Defensive walls can be traced back to the early Neolithic era, when ancient civilizations constructed them to encircle settlements and temples. For thousands of years, fortifications around cities, military installations, and castles provided security from potential aggressors and unwanted outside influences. More extensive border walls marked the boundaries of nations and territories, in theory offering protection from larger-scale threats. Advances in warfare technology eventually outstripped the ability of walls to serve as a complete defense, but the central purpose of walls and civilization's reliance on them has remained into the modern era. Though the walls, fences, and barrier borders of the 20th and 21st centuries are not designed to repel cannon fire or sieges, the motivations underlying their construction are still based on the same essential principles: to keep in, keep out, and divide.

The most significant challenge to building a library collection on walls and fortifications is the sheer scope of the available material, with works available from trade and university presses as well as more specialized publishers that focus on archaeology, military studies, and local history. Both ancient and contemporary walls have been a subject of fascination for centuries, making them a well-studied topic for nonfiction writers and researchers, as well as a potent symbol in fictional narratives. Determining which walls are most important for inclusion in the library's collection is a vital first step.

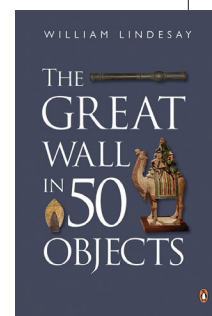
Those eager to read about well-known historical walls have a plethora of popular and scholarly titles to choose from, while for others, appropriately researched works for a collection, say, on the walls of Great Zimbabwe, might be unavailable, too esoteric, or yet to be written. As works on these walls can touch on general and location-specific cultural history, military history and tactics, and archaeology and historical engineering, knowledge of the areas of interest of the library's users will be helpful in determining which of these aspects should guide the choice of materials.

The walls, barriers, and security fences of the modern era

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RISE AND FALL



By Kathleen McCallister

are tied inextricably to national and global concerns about security, immigration, and human rights, with shifting geopolitics and debates on relevant issues making it a challenging topic on which to supply up-to-date information and balanced views. On the subject of walls whose building or continued existence is contested, locating completely unbiased writing and reporting might be difficult or impossible; librarians should be aware of these issues when selecting works in these areas. In some cases, the best option available will be authors who at least openly acknowledge the slant in their perspectives.

This article presents a selection of resources both general and specific on notable historic and modern walls, and will hopefully be of use to both public and academic libraries.

Starred (★) items should be considered core titles for most collections. ■

WALLS ACROSS THE WORLD

Bryant, Rebecca. **The Past in Pieces: Belonging in the New Cyprus.** Univ. of Pennsylvania. 2010. 224p. ISBN 9780812222319. pap. \$26.50; ebk. ISBN 9780812206661.

Following the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in 1974, the United Nations-established Green Line cut the island in two until 2003, when border-crossing was allowed for the first time in 30 years. Anthropologist Bryant analyzes effects of these events on Greek and Turkish Cypriots, and reasons for the continuing lack of reunification.

Di Cintio, Marcello. **Walls: Travels Along the Barricades.** Soft Skull. 2013. 288p. ISBN 9781593765248. pap. \$16.95.

With eight chapters exploring communities surrounding eight different walls and barriers, Di Cintio's first-person exploration focuses on the emotional and psychological effects of living next to symbols of power and isolation.

★Frye, David. **Walls: A History of Civilization in Blood and Brick.** Scribner. 2018. 304p. ISBN 9781501172700. \$28; ebk. ISBN 9781501172724.

Frye examines walls in civilizations from 2,000 BC to current day—Europe, the Near East, China, and the Americas, delving into the development of walls as methods of protection and exclusion. He also considers the beliefs of those who raised up these walls—and those who chose to live outside them.

★Marshall, Tim. **The Age of Walls: How Barriers Between Nations Are Changing Our World.** Scribner. 2018. 288p. ISBN 9781501183904. \$26; ebk. ISBN 9781501183928.

Part 3 of Marshall's *Politics of Place* series looks at modern walls and borders—including non-physical “walls,” such as China's Great Firewall—with an eye toward the geopolitical reasons they've been constructed and their potential existence in the future.

Volner, Ian. **The Great Great Wall: Along the Borders of History from China to Mexico.** Abrams. 2019. 304p. ISBN 9781419732829. \$27; ebk. ISBN 9781683355304.

Using Trump's proposed U.S.-Mexico wall as a through line, architectural journalist Volner combines travel writ-

ing with historical research and current reporting to describe his visits to the sites of the world's most well-known walls.

THE BERLIN WALL

The Berlin Wall; for Apple or Android

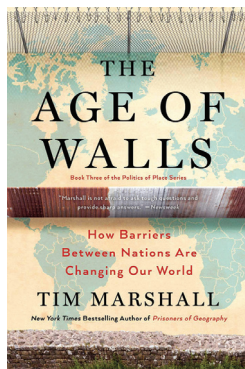
Based on the website *chronik-der-mauer.de*, this app's interactive map functions as a general educational tool or on-location guide, with text and audiovisual information linked to various locations of historical interest.

Schneider, Peter. **The Wall Jumper.** Univ. of Chicago. 1998. 144p. ISBN 9780226739410. pap. \$23.

First published in 1982, Schneider's essay-like story is a view of the mind-set when the Berlin Wall still stood, expressed through a kaleidoscope of characters from East and West Berlin who cross the wall for both serious and frivolous reasons.

★Taylor, Frederick. **The Berlin Wall: A World Divided, 1961–1989.** Harper Perennial. 528p. 2008. ISBN 9780060786144. pap. \$15.99; ebk. ISBN 9780061870361.

Of the plethora of books on the concrete barrier that divided Berlin, Taylor's history is one of the best, providing a thorough look at the world of postwar Germany and the global politics that led to the wall's construction and fall.



Willner, Nina. **Forty Autumns: A Family's Story of Courage and Survival on Both Sides of the Berlin Wall.** Morrow. 2016. 416p. ISBN 9780062410320. pap. \$15.99; ebk. ISBN 9780062410337.

Willner, a former intelligence officer who led operations in East Berlin during the Cold War,

constructs a thoughtful family memoir recounting how five lives, including her own, were drastically altered by the wall and the political divide between East and West.

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA

China's Great Wall. Koch Vision: Entertainment One. 2008. 100 min. \$28.99.

This two-part documentary makes use of CGI, reenactments, interviews, and on-location footage to explore the mythology, history, and technology that make up the wall.

Lindesay, William. **The Great Wall in 50 Objects.** Penguin. 2016. 402p. ISBN 9780734310484. pap. \$28.95; ebk. ISBN 9781760142469.

Lindesay's lifelong work on the Great Wall of China has produced several excellent books, but most engaging is this artifact-centered history, in which essays on maps, bricks, weapons, photos, and even other books analyze the wall's past and its relationship to Chinese and Mongolian cultures.

Man, John. **The Great Wall: The Extraordinary Story of China's Wonder of the World.** Da Capo. 2008. 352p. ebk. ISBN 9780786731770.

Man presents a clear and readable history of the Great Wall from its building to the current day, and offers a solid debunking of various myths alongside anecdotes of his own visits.

Tong, Su. **Binu and the Great Wall.** Canongate U.S. 2008. 304p. ISBN 9781841959153. \$24; ebk. ISBN 9780802197726.

This elegant novel by the author of *Raise the Red Lantern* interweaves Chinese folklore and the building of the Great Wall to construct its narrative. When Binu's beloved husband is sent hundreds of miles away to labor on the wall, she leaves her tiny village to find and rescue him.

HADRIAN'S WALL

Goldsworthy, Adrian. **Hadrian's Wall.** Basic. 2018. 192p. ISBN 9781541644427. \$25; ebk. ISBN 9781541644458.

A compact volume from a noted British historian, Goldsworthy's book provides a solid grounding in the reasons for the building of Hadrian's wall and its construction, with some looks at its changing purpose from its initial establishment to the latter days of Roman Britain.

Hodgson, Nick. **Hadrian's Wall: Archaeology and History at the Limit of Rome's Empire.** Robert Hale. 2017. 224p. ISBN 9780719818158. \$41.95.

Hodgson, who's worked on many excavations of Hadrian's Wall, examines archaeological elements of the wall and offers evidence for the argument that it was a true defensive military line and not solely a territorial barrier.

THE WALLS OF CONSTANTINOPLE

★Crowley, Roger. **1453: The Holy War for Constantinople and the Clash of Islam**

and the West. Hachette. 2005. 320p. ISBN 9781401301910. \$29.99; ebk. ISBN 9781401305581.

Constantinople's fall to the Ottoman Empire marked the end of the Byzantine Empire and a turning point in military history. Crowley's survey of the fall not only covers the siege itself but also offers an overview of the history of the city and the social and cultural motivations that led to the Ottoman attack.

Philippides, Marios & Walter K. Hanak. **The Siege and the Fall of Constantinople in 1453: Historiography, Topography, and Military Studies.** Routledge. 2011. 816p. ISBN 9781409410645. \$240.

This immense volume contains an in-depth study of the siege itself, including analysis of eyewitness and contemporary accounts, examination of military tactics, and a chapter focused entirely on the makeup and topography of the city's walls.

THE ISRAELI WEST BANK WALL
Bacha, Julia. **Budrus.** Just Vision. 2009. 82 min. \$24.99

Bacha's documentary centers on Ayed Morrar and his daughter Iltezam, who organized nonviolent demonstrations of Palestinian and Israeli protestors against raising sections of the barrier that would divide and encircle the village of Budrus, cutting the residents off from their fields and olive groves.

Parry, William. **Against the Wall: The Art of Resistance in Palestine.** Lawrence Hill. 2011. 192p. ISBN 9781569767047. pap. \$24.95; ebk. ISBN 9781569768587.

The West Bank's wall has become one of the world's largest canvases for protest art. Photojournalist Parry sets vivid images of these works alongside interviews with Palestinians and official reports to present a view of the wall as both an object of oppression and a source for expression of grassroots resistance.

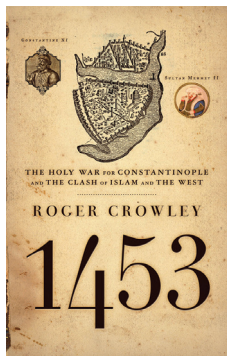
★ Sfar, Michael. **The Wall and the Gate: Israel, Palestine, and the Legal Battle for Human Rights.** Metropolitan. 2018. 528p. ISBN 9781250122704. \$35; ebk. ISBN 9781250122711.

Sparked by a petition from a farmer in the occupied West Bank, Israeli human rights

lawyer Sfar's book employs interviews and case materials to look at the effects of the wall, and the legal and humanitarian struggles caused by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

THE U.S.-MEXICO BORDER

★ Cantú, Francisco. **The Line Becomes A River.** Riverhead. 2018. 256p. ISBN 9780735217713. \$26; ebk. ISBN 9780735217720.



Frustrated by trying to understand the border through books, Cantú, the grandson of a Mexican immigrant, joined the U.S. Border Patrol for four years and saw firsthand the brutality of the environment and border enforcement along the U.S.-Mexico divide. Cantú drew criticism for his moral culpability in working for

border control, but his memoir is a complex, harrowing look at the realities of migration.

Ferraris, Andrea; Chiocca, Renata. **The Scar: Graphic Reportage from the U.S.-Mexican Border.** Fantagraphics. 2017. 40p. ISBN 9781683962205. pap. \$8.

Based on a 2017 visit to the U.S.-Mexico border, this comic uses potent black-and-white art to dramatize the issues of migration along with the border's barriers in two stories: one focused on the 2012 shooting of José Antonio Elena Rodríguez; the other on aid workers who leave supplies for migrants in the Sonoran Desert.

The Wall: Untold Stories, Unintended Consequences; www.usatoday.com/border-wall

The website for *USA Today's* 2018 Pulitzer Prize-winning report on the U.S.-Mexico border and Trump's planned wall features an interactive map of the border wall and fence as it stood in 2017, documentary videos, text and audio reports, and a virtual reality experience.

THE PEACE WALLS OF BELFAST
Cosstick, Vicky. **Belfast: Toward a City Without Walls.** Colourpoint. 192p. ISBN 9781780730721. \$29.95

Cosstick delves into the history of Belfast's peace walls, erected between Catholic and Protestant neighborhoods, and the ways in which the surrounding communities and visitors interact with them. He offers a hopeful perspective toward the struc-

tures' potential removal.

The Peacewall Archive; www.peacewall-archive.net

Funded by the UK Arts & Humanities Research Council, the archive aims to maintain comprehensive documentation of Belfast's peace walls and includes maps, photographs, a time line, and links to resources for further reading and study.

CASTLES AND FORTS

Battle Castle. Parallax Film Productions. 2012. 270 min. \$24.95 from MVD Entertainment Group.

In this six-episode series, historian Dan Snow explores six different castles, the building of their fortifications and defenses, and how they withstood—or didn't—a critical historical siege. A tie-in book written by Snow, *Battle Castles: 500 Years of Knights and Siege Warfare*, is also available.

Gurstelle, William. **Defending Your Castle: Build Catapults, Crossbows, Moats, Bulletproof Shields, and More Defensive Devices To Fend Off the Invading Hordes.** Chicago Review. 2014. 176p. ISBN 9781613746820. pap. \$16.95; ebk. ISBN 9781613746851.

For DIYers or those who'd like a lighter look at history, Gurstelle's tongue-in-cheek book covers the history of six conquerors and the walls, moats, barricades, and weapons that stood against them, then follows with practical instructions for readers to build their own versions.

Kaufmann, J.E. & H.W. Kaufmann. **The Medieval Fortress: Castles, Forts, and Walled Cities of the Middle Ages.** Da Capo. 2004. 320p. ISBN 9780306813580. pap. \$25.

The authors dig into the history of forts and castles from a military perspective, detailing the elements of fortification and the chronological development of castles as defensive installations beginning in the Middle Ages and continuing through the fall of Rome.

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